

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 20, 2009

**JUSTICE KILBRIDE NAMED JUDGE OF THE YEAR BY ILLINOIS
CHAPTER OF AMERICAN BOARD OF TRIAL ADVOCATES**

Illinois Supreme Court Justice Thomas L. Kilbride has been named Judge of the Year by the Illinois Chapter of the American Board of Trial Advocates (ABOTA).

Justice Kilbride was honored and received the award at a noon luncheon Friday, November 20 at the University Club in Chicago.

“Justice Kilbride was chosen not only because of his career on the Illinois Supreme Court, but also because of his 20 years in private practice,” said Illinois ABOTA president Geoffrey L. Gifford. “His good public works, all the good things he’s done in pro bono and other community service make him an unusually well-qualified candidate for this award.”

ABOTA is a 50-year-old national organization of civil trial lawyers comprised of an equal number of well-respected, highly talented plaintiff and defense attorneys. Its primary focus is to preserve the right of a trial by jury in civil cases, and the independence of the judiciary. The Illinois Chapter has about 90 members.

Justice Kilbride, who grew up in Kankakee, received his B.A. degree *magna cum laude* from Saint Mary’s in 1978; and his law degree from Antioch School of Law in Washington D.C. in 1981. While in law school, Justice Kilbride completed judicial internships for the administrative assistant to the Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court and for U.S. District Court Judge Joyce Hens Green.

Justice Kilbride was elected to the Supreme Court in November 2000 from the Third Judicial District, which is comprised of 21 Illinois counties straddling Interstate 80 from Indiana to Iowa. Those counties are: Will, Iroquois, Kankakee, Grundy, LaSalle, Marshall, Putnam, Bureau, Whiteside, Henry, Stark, Peoria, Fulton, Knox, Whiteside, Rock Island, Mercer, Warren, Henderson, Hancock and McDonough.

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Before joining the Supreme Court, Justice Kilbride practiced law for 20 years in Rock Island, engaging in the general practice of law, including appeals, environmental law, labor law, employment matters and other general civil and criminal matters. He was admitted to practice in the United States District Court of Central Illinois and the United States Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals.

Justice Kilbride serves as the Court's liaison to several important Supreme Court committees and the Lawyers Trust Fund. He is a member of the Illinois State Bar Association; past president of the Illinois Township Attorneys Association; and a past board member of the Illinois Pro Bono Center. For nearly two decades, he was a volunteer legal advisor to the Community Caring Conference; He also assisted the Quad-City Harvest, Inc.; the Children's Disability Project; and in organizing an interfaith coalition of church and community organizations in the Quad Cities area.

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**(FOR MORE INFORMATION: Contact Joseph Tybor, press secretary to the Illinois
Supreme Court, at 312-793-2323)**